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Volume 1, Issue 2

SIK

Global Knowledge Report

Students for International Knowledge

Message from the President of SIK

Welcome to our second issue! Much has happened over the past month. The first newsletter was a fight from start to finish to put out, but well worth it. Since then, we've added a weekly television show on San Bernardino public access TV, a Coyote Radio show titled *The World Abroad* (Mondays at 5pm), and a weekly international discussion meeting (Tuesdays at 7pm, SU-207). With the support of a number of talented, motivated, and knowledgeable people, SIK has expanded rapidly. It won't be long before we're known campus wide, or with the opening of chapters in San Francisco State and UC Berkeley in the coming year, throughout the state of California. I hope you enjoy this issue and join us in our journey of rectifying wrong through the pursuit of knowledge. —Andre Castillo, President of Students for International Knowledge



Dinna, Ranya, Dr. Little, Anthony, Artur, and Andre discussing violence against women in Pakistan, hosted by Keran Choudry.



SIK was founded in 2006 by a group of students from Cal State San Bernardino to educate students, faculty and staff about international news and events not readily available to the CSUSB campus.

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Questions, Comments, Concerns, Suggestions? Contact SIK. Donations Welcomed and Needed.

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Understanding Religious Terrorism: The Jewish Defense League

By Andre Castillo



Here pictured beside Ayman al-Zawahiri (left), Meir Kahane's radical views have been compared to that of Al Qaeda's

"The modus operandi of the JDL... has included shootings, assaults, bombings, stabbings, rock throwing and arson"

The history of religious terrorism dates back to the Roman Empire, when the Sicarii protested Roman persecution of the Jewish people. In modern times, the popular perception of the War on Terror continues to be one of a war against Al Qaeda in particular and against "Islamic terrorism" in general. What has largely been ignored in this debate is the idea of religious terrorism as a worldwide phenomenon. Whether Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Seikh or Hindu, sectarian based political violence has been rising for the last thirty years. Much talk as been made, and much money has been spent, on finding a solution to the problem of terrorism. I would offer a look into other, less discussed, forms of religious terrorism to find answers underneath the shroud. I'll begin with a group known originally as the Jewish Defense League.

During the 1970s, Jewish American and Ultra Orthodox Rabbi Meir Kahane started becoming active in right-wing religious and political violence. Kahane, a native of Brooklyn, New York, was the founder and spiritual leader of the Kach ("Thus") movement in the United States and Israel. Over the course of his lifetime, he personally encouraged and led violence against Arabs, Soviets, white supremacists and various people who opposed his views. He frequently espoused a famous Jewish proverb, "If one comes to slay you, slay him first" (Sanhedrin, 72d) and argued that "the Jewish people is a unique, distinct and separate people, divinely chosen at Sinai, a religion-nation, transcending the foolishness and danger of shallow secular nationalism."

Disturbed by what he perceived as increasing anti-Jewish sentiment in the city of New York in the 1960s, Rabbi Kahane sought to address this by forming a militant vigilante group titled the Jewish Defense League (JDL) in 1968. Within a year the JDL became active in anti-Soviet protests and picketing, and in January of 1971 JDL activists detonated a bomb at the Soviet

cultural offices in Washington.

In 1971 the JDL's founder, Rabbi Kahane, immigrated to Israel to escape potential criminal charges and founded the Kach movement. However, in the United States, the JDL continued to attack Arab and Soviet diplomats. Rabbi Kahane remained the official leader of the JDL until the group's assassination of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) director Alex Odeh in 1985, of which the JDL was never convicted. The JDL remained very active in terrorist activity until the conviction of several of its members in 1987.

The Kach movement founded by Kahane was purportedly an attempt to encourage *aliyah*, or Jewish emigration, to Israel. After arriving in the West Bank Kahane advocated for the forceful expulsion of all Arabs from holy Jewish lands and sought to bring his views into the realm of politics. This stemmed from Kahane's belief that "it is a central tenet of Judaism that God wished the Jew to create a unique, total, pure and complete Jewish life, society and state in Eretz Israel."

After the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre of Israeli athletes, Kahane attempted and failed to sabotage the Libyan consulate in Rome. Subsequently, Kahane "from that time on, [had] been very careful not to be directly involved in acts of terror himself" while at the same time "verbally...supporting the acts of Jewish violence and terrorism perpetrated against Arabs."

Rabbi Kahane's first foray into Israeli politics in 1977 fell a few hundred votes short of acquiring a seat in the Israeli Knesset parliament. After failing again in 1981, Kahane eventually won a seat in 1984, whereupon he and his followers held a celebration of sorts, parading through the Arab quarter in the old city of Jerusalem, smashing vegetable stalls and hitting bystanders.

Under international pressure to reign in Kach, the Israeli government banned racist groups from taking part in the Knesset in 1988. In 1990 Kahane was assassinated during a visit to New York, leading to his son's formation of the offshoot Kahane Chai ("Kahane Lives") who was also killed in 2000. On February 25, 1994 another New York native and Kach affiliate, Baruch Goldstein, entered the Ibrahim Mosque at the Cave of the Patriarchs in the city of Hebron, Palestine and proceeded to kill 29 worshipping men, women and children and wounding another 125 over the span of 10 minutes before eventually being overtaken and killed. Both Kach and Kahane Chai were subsequently officially labeled terrorist organizations and banned by the Israeli government.

Overall the *modus operandi* of the JDL, Kach, and Kahane Chai has included shootings, violent assaults, protests, bombings, stabbings, rock throwing and arson. The JDL and Kach/Kahane Chai pull their sympathy and support, financially and logistically, from young Israeli Jews (primarily from the military) and wealthy American Jews from New York in particular. In total, according to the MIPT database the JDL has committed 72 terrorist attacks resulting in 37 injuries and 5 fatalities while Kach/Kahane Chai has committed 6 direct terrorist attacks resulting in 250 injuries and 39 fatalities.

Recent years have seen the JDL, Kach, and Kahane Chai rise in levels of activity. In December 2001 two active members of the Jewish Defense League, Irving David Rubin and Earl Leslie Krugel, were arrested while planning terrorist bombings against Lebanese-American Congressmen Darrel Issa and the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, California. In the summer of 2005 a Kach member defected from the Israeli military, climbed a bus in Arab northern Israel, and opened fire, killing four. Kach and Kahane Chai remain active in the Hebron area of Palestine, particularly in the settlement of Qiryat Arba where a shrine to the 1994 killer Baruch

Goldstein remains. Peace workers from the Christian Peacemaker Team and the Tel Rumeida Project continue to report harassment and threats from Kach members, leaders, and their supporters, many of whom are American emigrants from the Brooklyn area.



Israeli colonizer graffiti in Tel Rumeida, Hebron, a stronghold of Kach

Mothers in The Cradle of Civilization

By Dinna Omar

The Sumerians during 4000 - 3000 BC built the first cities of the world between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers of present-day Iraq. Currently, Iraq seems far from looking like the original Garden of Eden and the "cradle of civilization." After years of Islamic empires, colonization, sanctions, war, and more war, the primary burden of the tragic story of this ancient land continues to fall on women.

Before the 1991 Persian Gulf War women in Iraq were given comparatively more legal, political and social rights than the other women in the Middle East and North Africa. Parallel to the rise of Baathist Socialism in the 1968 was the increase of women's agency in Iraq. Article 19 of the 1970 Provisional Constitution declared that no person should be denied equal representation before the law on the basis of "sex, blood, language, social origin, or religion." In January 1971, Iraq also ratified the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These international agreements provide equal protection under international law to all. Labor laws were also established, similar to the sexual harassment laws in the United States to protect women in the work place.



Kach-supported Israeli colonizers (settlers) are well armed and act with relative impunity against the largely defenseless Palestinian population.

"Before the 1991 Persian Gulf War women in Iraq were given comparatively more legal, political and social rights than the other women in the Middle East and North Africa."

"In the year 2002, Iraq had the lowest regional adult literacy levels—literate women were less than 25% of the female population."



Two Iraqi students in Baghdad. The female student population has dramatically decreased since the 1991 Gulf War. (picture from news.bbc.co.uk)

"In our efforts to bring liberty to the people of Iraq, we may have done just the opposite."

Eager to generate economic development, Saddam Hussein and the Baathist party in 1971 authorized mandatory laws to educate people in rural areas. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) the literacy rates between 1969 and 1989 grew over 45%. Women were specifically targeted; the laws aimed at women mandated that citizens from both sexes attend primary school and government assistance was provided to attend secondary school. Some oral sources claim that if fathers did not allow their daughters to attend school they would be imprisoned. The Baathist party adopted even more unconventional laws; in 1979 they attempted to pass legislation to eradicate all illiteracy. The Government established literacy centers run by the General Federation of Iraqi Women. Almost all the teachers in the literacy centers were women. In 1987 the literacy rate of women grew to almost 76% of the female population according to UNESCO. This statistic includes Sunni, Shi'a and Kurdish women alike. In 1980 women were granted the right to vote and to hold public office. Unfortunately, the enjoyment of these new found rights for women were limited.

In 1972 Iraq made a provocative move to nationalize its oil. In 1980 the Iran-Iraq war started and during the eighth year of the war on March 16 and 17, 1988, Iraq deployed poison gas on the Kurdish city of Halabja. According to Human Rights Watch between 4,000 and 5,000 Kurdish rebels and Iranians tragically died. The straw that broke the camel's back was Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. These events led to UN Security Council Resolution 661, which placed economic sanctions on Iraq. An estimated 500,000 Iraqi children under the age of five later died as a result of the sanctions. Due to a lack of infrastructure, water, and most importantly milk, women started to miscarry 1 out of every 3 pregnancies. Effects of the sanctions on women are

still being felt today. Over 90% of Iraqi women suffer from iron deficiency anemia. Osteoporosis and other calcium deficient related illnesses have grown over 50% since 1990.

After the first Persian Gulf War in 1991 the progress made regarding women's rights was inverted. This reversal was mostly due to Saddam Hussein's lack of political capital. To stay in power he decided to revert to the tribal and traditional Islamic ways to appeal to the religious aristocracy and pull more support from those he previously isolated in the early 1970's. He embraced Islam as a political tool and amplified the gender gap. As a consequence, he neglected the fact that the Qur'an provides women with explicit rights to inheritance, independent property, divorce and the right to testify in a court of law. Families also no longer had the financial capacity to send their children to school, and the government no longer had the financial capability to subsidize their education. Therefore, school enrollment decreased and female illiteracy increased. When faced with limited resources and safety troubles, many families chose to keep their female children at home. According to UNESCO, in the year 2002, Iraq had the lowest regional adult literacy levels—literate women were less than 25% of the female population.

Women are the ones who have witnessed the ugliness of war from the sideline—they are widowed, displaced, detained, raped, separated from loved ones and victims of violence and injury. The Red Cross has published a study entitled "Women Facing War," designed to increase awareness of the plight of women in conflict and of the protection to which they are entitled. Upon the fall of Baghdad, President Bush claimed that the United States has played a vital role in liberating the women in Iraq. However upon further analysis and research we may realize that what Iraqi women may truly need is liberation from us. As Hannv Megallv. executive

Africa division of Human Rights Watch, said, "women and girls today in Baghdad are scared, and many are not going to schools or jobs or looking for work. If Iraqi women are to participate in postwar society, their physical security needs to be an urgent priority." Women in Iraq today live in fear. They are isolated in their homes. Sexual violence and abduction were not considered a major problem until the first Gulf War. Victims, witnesses, and law enforcement authorities only document a few of these crimes. According to the Human Rights Watch crimes against women often go undocumented and unreported due to a lack of stability and trust in local officials. There is no police; officials are not trusted to maintain security. If women report to tribal leaders they face the risk of honor killings and social stigma.

In our efforts to bring liberty to the people of Iraq, we may have done just the opposite. Women's agency decreases every time the U.S. intervenes in Iraq, now becoming almost nonexistent. Words like democracy and liberty are not much good if you cannot put food on the table. Women, whose wombs form the cradle of life, are now finding life increasingly difficult within the cradle of civilization.

China and Energy:

Implications for East Asian

Security By Filomeno Batayola

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is widely known as a fast-growing economic power not just in Asia but the world as well. However, less attention has been given to its rising demand for energy imports. In 2004 China became the second largest consumer of petroleum products (after the US) with daily imports of over six million barrels. China has a comprehensive strategy to guarantee its future energy supplies.

One aspect of this strategy that may impact on East Asian security is China's actions to secure the sea routes to the

Middle East. Over half of its oil imports come from the Middle East, a trend that will likely continue in the future. China is concerned about this dependency because of American actions in the event of a conflict.

The PRC is afraid that if it were every to use force to reunify Taiwan, the United States would intervene. Among other things, the US can block tankers carrying energy supplies to China and adversely affect its social and economic sectors. To reduce these effects, China is concentrating its efforts on making sure that energy from the Middle East can be transported safely during a conflict. It has focused its efforts on three areas.

One, China is strengthening its relationships with countries along the route to the Middle East such as Pakistan and Burma. Providing economic and military assistance to these countries will increase its access to overseas ports and political support for its East Asian security objectives, most notably Taiwan reunification.

Two, it is using these relationships to build facilities that can be used by the Chinese military. For example, it is financing a deep-water port in Pakistan as well as expanding naval facilities in Burma. Both can potentially be used by Chinese military ships in the future.

Three, China is modernizing its navy, which may be used to escort tankers in the event of a conflict. It has been buying and developing advanced warships and submarines that will allow it to better deal with the US Navy.

These three efforts will allow China to better secure its energy shipments from the Middle East from US interdiction. It will not be able to hold off the US Navy indefinitely, but in the case of a conflict over Taiwan it may give China the time it needs to take control of the island before reduced energy imports drastically affect the nation.



China currently has over 300 short and long-ranged missiles aimed Taiwan, threatening to invade if Taiwan declares independence. The U.S. has promised to intervene militarily in Taiwan's defense.

"In the case of a conflict over Taiwan, this energy strategy may give China the time it needs to take control of the island before reduced energy imports drastically affect the nation."

Website Highlight



WatchingAmerica.com

"WatchingAmerica.com's stated purpose is 'to reflect as accurately as possible how others perceive the richest and most powerful country in the world.'"

With these factors in place it will be able to act more aggressively in East Asia over a wide range of issues. Its modernized navy could allow China to establish a military presence in disputed islands. It can also block the shipping of other countries over other disputes. China may not act more aggressively in resolving its problems in East Asia, but it gives the country a lot more options when determining possible courses of action. Its ability to increasingly affect East Asian security through its energy strategy deserves more attention.



Chinese People's Liberation Army
(© AFP / Shane T. McCoy)

What Are They Thinking About Us?

By Albert Sabaté

Have you ever wondered what others really think about the U.S.A.? *WatchingAmerica.com* is a site dedicated to providing an answer to that question. This website takes published news and views on the U.S. from foreign countries and compiles them into a rich, convenient resource of English-language media. *WatchingAmerica.com's* stated purpose is "to reflect as accurately as possible how others perceive the richest and most powerful country in the world" adding that it "[has] no political agenda," instead "[hoping] that the insights gained by reading various points of view will help to raise level of debate, open minds, and promote understanding among the people of the world."

As a result of user-friendly organization and regular updates, *WatchingAmerica.com* is an easy and effective means of gaining insight into both American and International politics.

Operation Ajax: Where We Went Wrong with Iran

By Shawn Mohamed

With recent events and the world's attention turned toward Iran, it is important to know the history of Iran and the surrounding region in order to accurately assess what is happening and why. This article outlines a key event that occurred in Iran's modern history that has shaped it and its foreign policy to this day. That key event was "Operation Ajax," a CIA led coup d'etat in which the United States and Britain joined forces in order to overthrow the democratically elected government of Iran in 1953. It is important to look at "Operation Ajax" and observe the everlasting effects that it had on Iran and its foreign relations with the United States to better understand where we are today.

Ahmad Shah, the last of the Qajar rulers, left Iran in 1925 on a trip to Europe and, with that trip, abdicated his throne. In his absence Reza Khan, a colonel in the Russian Cossack Brigade, assumed power and proclaimed himself Shah of Iran—Reza Shah. Thus began the rule of the Pahlavi dynasty and the end of the Qajar rule. Following the example of Turkey at the time, Reza Shah sought to modernize and westernize Iran. Examples of such reforms included increasing the central authority, strengthening the army, expanding the bureaucracy, creating an extensive primary and secondary school system, bureaucracy, creating an extensive school system, expanding the road

network, and continuing to strive for a completely secular government. Reza Shah, however, was also responsible for taking away the effective power of the Majlis (Iranian Parliament), silencing the press, arresting of any opposition to the government and jailing many religious leaders. Reza Shah was still very much an authoritarian ruler. With the Russian revolution happening after World War I, the Russians relinquished their attention from Iran. Britain, however, had discovered oil within Iran in 1908 and continued to have a vested interest in the region and remained an imperial presence. Due to increasing pressures by Britain and Russia during World War II, Reza Shah abdicated his position as Shah and left his son Mohammad Reza Shah in power.

At the end of World War II, Britain was able to return its attention to Iran. The war had devastated the economies of not only Britain but Europe as well. With Britain's hand in Iran as well on Iranian oil, this was a surefire way to subsidize and stabilize their economy. Mohammad Reza Shah continued to have prosperous relations with Britain as he allowed Britain almost full control of Iranian oil production and handling. This, along with the continued imperial presence of Britain and the decline of living conditions in Iran, gave the Iranian people the image of their leader as a mere puppet at the hands of the British Empire.

In 1949 the idea of nationalizing Iranian Oil began to take hold. The face of the movement was Mohammed Mossadegh, a fervent nationalist who believed in an independent Iran. In 1951 the Majlis voted to nationalize the Iranian oil industry. Shortly after the nationalization of Iranian oil, the British were expelled from Iran. The British response to the eviction was to place a worldwide embargo on the purchase of Iranian oil. Over a period of two years the embargo would cause the Iranian economy to suffer. The remnants of imperialism, along with the devastating

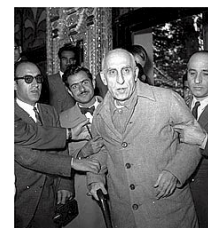
economic effects of the embargo only served to heighten Iranian hatred for Britain and strengthen Iranian nationalism. The Iranian people elected their nationalist leader Mohammed Mossadegh in a democratic election to the position of Prime Minister in 1951.

Negotiations took place between Britain and Iran to resolve the issue of control of the oil in Iran. Iran needed British support to operate the refineries in Iran because they did not have the training to run these facilities. The British, in return for this support, wanted overwhelming control and profit from Iranian Oil. The two countries would remain at a standstill and the negotiations would never materialize into anything substantial. Britain's response was to depict Mossadegh as a madman before the international community and advocate his removal. From the perspective of the U.S. under the Truman administration, Mossadegh was not seen as a threat but as a potential ally. As time went on, and as the Eisenhower administration began to settle in, the advent of the Cold War was apparent. The United States was worried that the declining economic situation in Iran, along with the Tudeh Party (Iranian Communist Party) having substantial weight in the country, combined with a shared border with Russia would make Iran susceptible to Communism.

President Eisenhower agreed to help the British government by leading a coup on the Iranian government and remove Mossadegh from power. After deposing Mossadegh, Mohammad Reza Shah would be reinstated with absolute rule. With the Shah in power, Britain could resume its operations in Iranian Oil and continue to profit from the oil commodity, while the United States would ensure that Iran was safe from Communism. In 1953 Operation Ajax took place and Mohammed Mossadegh, the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iran was removed from



American financed Pro-Shah troops taking over Tehran Radio



Mossadegh entering the military tribunal hearing in Tehran, November 8, 1953

"Many historians argue that had "Operation Ajax" never taken place a secular democracy would still exist in Iran today."



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SIK on TV! With Alternate Focus

Middle Eastern Documentaries on
San Bernardino Public Access TV
For show times and listings, see
csusbsik.wordpress.com/siktv

office, tried, and sentenced to house arrest for the rest of his life. Mohammad Reza Shah was reinstated and remained in power until the 1979 Revolution.

Many historians argue that had "Operation Ajax" never taken place a secular democracy would still exist in Iran today. The revolution of 1979 would never have occurred, as the revolution was a revolt against the tyranny of Mohammad Reza Shah. In addition, it is fair to say that relations in the Middle East would be a little different considering that a democratic Iran would have been more poised to be an ally in the region. It is also fair to consider that with Iran acting as a model for an

Islamic society to adopt democracy as their form of government, other countries would have followed suit, thus creating more democratic allies in the region. When looking retrospectively at "Operation Ajax", it is easy to list off a series of "what-ifs," but the reality is that at the time of "Operation Ajax" the United States saw a potential threat of Communism taking over Iran, and in the era of the Cold War, the U.S. could not afford that loss. The United States, like in many other cases, traded the unstable but growing democracy in Iran for the stability of a dictatorship, which in the long run ended up destroying foreign relation ties with Iran.

Donate to SIK! Contribute to Our Mission

Due to ASI funding policies, SIK members were forced to pay for the \$250 cost of printing this month's edition of the newsletter (in addition to \$50 of the cost from April) out of their own pockets. SIK is a very motivated, ambitious group that serves the public interest. If you would like our work to continue, we ask for your support. Email us at castill1@gmail.com for more information. Ways to contribute include:

- Financial (\$5 will print 4 newsletters)
- Documentaries and Foreign Films
- International Music
- Books on International Topics
- Video/Audio equipment
- Office Supplies
- Volunteer for the Summer
- *Join SIK! Attend Weekly Meetings*
 - Tuesday Discussions, 7-8pm, SU-207
 - Wednesday Agenda, 5:30-6:30pm, SU-207

First Annual SIK Banquet, 5/24 7:30-9:00pm

\$5 cover charge with a \$5 suggested donation at the door. Will feature speeches from the President, Professor Yaghoubian, a buffet-style dinner, and live entertainment. Reservations must be made prior to May 21st.